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The next step is for the child to be taught the names of those who visit the family. By this means it also learns how to know the relatives who are not living in the family home. Children of two to five know very few people beyond the members of their own family circle. Thus Obala, at three years old, did not know who I was, although I had been to her home and talked to her many times. Her parents told me that this was due to their never having told her my name.

Feeding. The food children eat at this stage is the same as that given to the adult members of the family, the only difference being that the children are not restricted to feeding at particular times. However little it may be, a certain amount of food is always left for them in the pot.

The children go out to play when the adults go to their different duties. In the middle of the day they return much exhausted and ask for the portion put aside for them after the morning meal. When there is only one child, the mother, before leaving for her day's work, tells it where to find this food. The varied and exacting activities of a child of this age make food an important factor in its life.

Play

The play groups. The child begins its association with the play groups through the action of the nurses. At first the nurse, next to the mother, is its chief playmate. Through her the child comes into contact with children from neighbouring families and thus acquires friends and playmates. Although it takes the child a long time to make new friends, its social life begins as early as the seventh month when the nurses, wishing to play nearby, seat two babies side by side where they may learn to play together.

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be found playing alone. Weaving becomes more popular between these ages, and before the advent of thread this was done by means of grass stalks which were woven into several patterns.

These patterns are still woven sometimes at home and sometimes at play, but although they have not totally disappeared they are no longer much in evidence. Male children are sometimes taught to weave patterns by the girls. At present odd threads gathered from old socks or rags are used while stalks of grass serve as needles.

Age-group friendship. The age-group friendship which characterises so much of a girl's pre-marital life first makes its appearance during the school-going age. But at this time it is friendship in the simplest sense and is more like a coming-together brought about by common interests. The main feature of the relationship is visiting, combined with moderate entertainment. After taking food the young guests join in the play activities of the friends they visit. The parents also take an interest and put up with the financial burden involved. But the friendship established is essentially external in that it is established between neighbouring girls of two lineages.* Girls visit their friends in groups, and the relationship grows weaker as the girls grow up. It appeared to me that this friendship is strongest just before the advent of their association with males on a sex basis.

As their interest in boys increases, the young girls' natural desire for friendship is fulfilled. Friendships with other girls are very much weakened by marriage and

*Lineages. The term lineages refers to enlarged families with a common ancestor or founder. These may live side by side with the other related lineages. With the common ancestor and the branching family groups, the lineage structure appears as a 'Root System'. As a result of fights between the various lineages in the past, some have been widely dispersed and may be found living among other groups not related to them. Frequent migrations have also tended to complicate the structure.

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sometimes break up at the slightest provocation or misunderstanding. The lineal character of the friendship is facilitated by the social groupings of the people into lineages living side by side. This character is also assumed by the play groups which begin from the immediate family circle and widen to include other members of the lineage to which the children belong. Although there also exists a considerable degree of friendship among male children it does not seem to be organized as closely as that among the girls. Though I saw frequent examples of individual boyhood friendship I did not come across such a highly-developed arrangement.

The Cultural Pattern

Girls are born to a ready-made pattern of life and they are forced to follow this pattern from earliest childhood. The school-age period is the one in which girls are especially trained to fit into the culture to which they have been born. A woman's life therefore tends to show great conservatism even where civilizing influences have considerably penetrated. This conservatism is maintained through all the early training of the children and domestic activities are still carried on in almost the same traditional way.

In contrast, we find that male children between these ages have a greater degree of freedom. I noticed a larger variety of playthings among boys than among girls of the same school-going age. Day after day the girls repeated imitations of the maternal activities. It was also much more difficult to discover where a group of boys had been playing than to find the favourite playgrounds of the female children. This was perhaps due to the difference in their freedom of movement. The occupations of the girls keep them largely at home while the boys range over a much greater area.

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IV

ADOLESCENCE

357 593 In the interim period between childhood and adolescence there comes a time when a girl's ability to deal with domestic work is more advanced than her physical and mental development. It is during this period that the mother, still occupying a central position as adviser and supervisor of the girl's work, finds difficulty in the management of her daughter. Since the domestic work of her household is heavy, the mother uses all kinds of pressure to induce her daughter to do as much as she can.

356 The girl's life at this time is characterized by her increased interest in boys and desire to come into contact with them. The friendships established during childhood with other young girls are weakened by the development of a new object of friendship in the opposite sex. During this time the breasts of most girls develop noticeably. The girls show great interest in this development and employ various means to stimulate it. An instance of this interest can sometimes be seen among those who stuff clothes in their bosoms to exaggerate the size.

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On the whole, the period differs only in the fact that the girls definitely aspire to be grown-ups and are also more interested in friendship with boys.

Characteristics of Adolescence

183 This new period is the time when the mother leaves her daughter to bring her knowledge of domestic work to perfection by her own efforts. As compared with the school-going age, there is little or no interference from

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group of girls or young women meet, there is comment on what has been said about so-and-so in certain quarters. Mixed with this unwelcome gossip may come other features of great encouragement. Thus there is much emotional strain in the years preceding marriage. It is a time when both parties to the engagement are uncertain about what may develop next.

Amidst all this, the woman still has the freedom of talking to any young men she meets, and the emotional uncertainty, which is much stronger with a girl, compels her at times not to put all her hopes in one man. Although her relationship with former friends becomes relatively weak, she does not lose interest in them until she eventually gets married. A great deal of persuasion is employed. Each time she meets her friends her sympathies are tested. In this difficult period the male and female relatives of the man should play a beneficial part. Some carefully arranged marriages are broken owing to lack of such support.

In general, a betrothed woman is an object of competition. Once engaged, the forces that work against her engagement are let loose. Reports true and false are continually passed on. In the girl's family, the mother continues to instruct her on how to address the relatives whom she will meet in her new home. If the marriage is to be cancelled, the dowry paid by the first candidate must be paid back before the cattle of the other are accepted. Should the girl run away with someone else, she will, on her return, be beaten, and it is only after a long interval that the offence will be forgotten.

Pre-nuptial and modern education. There is no special attempt to educate mature girls just before marriage. The nature of the training they receive is merely a continuation of that given to them in their adolescence. Thus they obtain information about their future status